he will allow inspectors back into his country knowing that any one of them might kill him? Is it the intention of the Administration to get inspectors back into Iraq and thus answers to lingering and critical questions regarding Iraq's military capabilities, or is the intent to invade that country regardless of the near total absence of information? Or actually make it impossible for Suddam Hussein to accept the inspectors.

Mr. Ritter, who as former chief UN inspector in Iraq probably knows that country better than any of us here, made some excellent points in a recent meeting with Republican members of Congress. According to Mr. Ritter, no American-installed regime could survive in Iraq. Interestingly, Mr. Ritter noted that though his rule is no doubt despotic, Saddam Hussein has been harsher toward Islamic fundamentalism than any other Arab regime. He added that any U.S. invasion to remove Saddam from power would likely open the door to an anti-American fundamentalist Islamic regime in Iraq. That can hardly be viewed in a positive light here in the United States. Is a policy that replaces a bad regime with a worse regime the wisest course to follow?

Much is made of Iraqi National Congress leader Ahmed Chalabi, as a potential post-invasion leader of Iraq. Mr. Ritter told me that in his many dealings with Chalabi, he found him to be completely unreliable and untrustworthy. He added that neither he nor the approximately 100 Iraqi generals that the US is courting have any credibility inside Iraq, and any attempt to place them in power would be rejected in the strongest manner by the Iraqi people. Hundreds, if not thousands, of American military personnel would be required to occupy Iraq indefinitely if any American-installed regime is to remain in power. Again, it appears we are creating a larger problem than we are attempting to solve.

Similarly, proponents of a US invasion of Iraq often cite the Kurds in the northern part of that country as a Northern Alliance-like ally, who will do much of our fighting on the ground and unseat Saddam. But just last week the Washington Times reported that neither of the two rival Kurdish groups in northern Iraq want anything to do with an invasion of Iraq.

In the meeting last month, Scott Ritter reminded members of Congress that a nation cannot go to war based on assumptions and guesses, that a lack of knowledge is no basis on which to initiate military action. Mr. Ritter warned those present that remaining acquiescent in the face of the Administration's seeming determination to exceed the authority granted to go after those who attacked us, will actually hurt the president and will hurt Congress. He concluded by stating that going in to Iraq without Congressionally-granted authority would be a ''failure of American democracy.'' Those pounding the war drums loudest for an invasion of Iraq should pause for a moment and ponder what Scott Ritter is saying. Thousands of lives are at stake.

[From the Los Angeles Times, June 19, 2002]

BEHIND ''PLOT'' ON HUSSEIN, A SECRET AGENDA

(By Scott Ritter)

President Bush has reportedly authorized the CIA to use all of the means at its disposal—including U.S. military special operations forces and CIA paramilitary teams—to eliminate Iraq's Saddam Hussein. According to reports, the CIA is to view any such plan as ''preparatory'' for a larger military strike.

Congressional leaders from both parties have greeted these reports with enthusiasm. In their rush to be seen as embracing the president's hard-line stance on Iraq, however, almost no one in Congress has questioned why a supposedly covert operation would be made public, thus undermining the very mission it was intended to accomplish.

It is high time that Congress start questioning the hype and rhetoric emanating from the White House regarding Baghdad, because the leaked CIA plan is well timed to undermine the efforts underway in the United Nations to get weapons inspectors back to work in Iraq. In early July, the U.N. secretary-general will meet with Iraq's foreign minister for a third round of talks on the return of the weapons monitors. A major sticking point is Iraqi concern over the use—or abuse—of such inspections by the U.S. for intelligence collection.

I recall during my time as a chief inspector in Iraq the dozens of extremely fit ''missile experts'' and ''logistics specialists'' who frequented my inspection teams and others. Drawn from U.S. units such as Delta Force or from CIA paramilitary teams such as the Special Activities Staff (both of which have an ongoing role in the conflict in Afghanistan), these specialists had a legitimate part to play in the difficult cat-and-mouse effort to disarm Iraq. So did the teams of British radio intercept operators I ran in Iraq from 1996 to 1998—which listened in on the conversations of Hussein's inner circle—and the various other intelligence specialists who were part of the inspection effort.

The presence of such personnel on inspection teams was, and is, viewed by the Iraqi government as an unacceptable risk to its nation's security.

As early as 1992, the Iraqis viewed the teams I led inside Iraq as a threat to the safety of their president. They were concerned that my inspections were nothing more than a front for a larger effort to eliminate their leader.

Those concerns were largely baseless while I was in Iraq. Now that Bush has specifically authorized American covert-operations forces to remove Hussein, however, the Iraqis will never trust an inspection regime that has already shown itself susceptible to infiltration and manipulation by intelligence services hostile to Iraq, regardless of any assurances the U.N. secretary-general might give.

The leaked CIA covert operations plan effectively kills any chance of inspectors returning to Iraq, and it closes the door on the last opportunity for shedding light on the true state of affairs regarding any threat in the form of Iraq weapons of mass destruction.

Absent any return of weapons inspectors, no one seems willing to challenge the Bush administration's assertions of an Iraqi threat. If Bush has a factual case against Iraq concerning weapons of mass destruction, he hasn't made it yet.

Can the Bush administration substantiate any of its claims that Iraq continues to pursue efforts to reacquire its capability to produce chemical and biological weapons, which was dismantled and destroyed by U.N. weapons inspectors from 1991 to 1998? The same question applies to nuclear weapons. What facts show that Iraq continues to pursue nuclear weapons aspirations?

Bush spoke ominously of an Iraqi ballistic missile threat to Europe. What missile threat is the president talking about? These questions are valid, and if the case for war is to be made, they must be answered with more than speculative rhetoric.

Congress has seemed unwilling to challenge the Bush administration's pursuit of war against Iraq. The one roadblock to an all-out U.S. assault would be weapons inspectors reporting on the facts inside Iraq. Yet without any meaningful discussion and debate by Congress concerning the nature of the threat posed by Baghdad, war seems all but inevitable.

The true target of the supposed CIA plan may not be Hussein but rather the weapons inspection program itself. The real casualty is the last chance to avoid bloody conflict.

TRIBUTE TO GEOFF MALEMAN

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 24, 2002

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the achievements of my friend and constituent Geoff Maleman, of Westchester, California.

As the President of the Westchester/LAX/Marina del Rey Chamber of Commerce, Geoff is a tireless leader in the business and greater community.

Following the tragic events of September 11th, Geoff spearheaded an effort with other local Chambers of Commerce to develop a task force to address challenges facing the business community. The travel industry surrounding Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is beginning to recover, in no small part, due to Geoff's leadership.

Geoff is a great communicator. We have cohosted numerous forums together in my Congressional District. Last October, Geoff and I spoke to hundreds of residents and business owners about security at Los Angeles International Airport, an issue of great concern to the neighboring communities. Geoff was both informative and reassuring in addressing the challenging and frightening issue.

Most importantly, Geoff and his wife Nicole are proud new parents of a beautiful baby girl, Kaitlyn Michelle Maleman—born during his term as President, on December 6, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, as Geoff's tenure as President of the Westchester/LAX/Marina del Rey Chamber of Commerce comes to an end, I appreciate this opportunity to share how proud and fortunate I am to have Geoff Maleman in my Congressional District.

ON HILLSBORO, OREGON'S RECEIPT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION'S CORE VALUES PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARD

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 24, 2002

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to honor Hillsboro, Oregon for its receipt of the International Association for Public Participation's Core Values Project of the Year Award for its Hillsboro 2020 Vision Project.

During the past 20 years, Hillsboro has experienced significant residential and economic growth. The community has become economically self-sufficient with a strong and diverse industrial base, and vital retail areas. It has grown geographically to more than double its